



SPONSOR:

BILL: _____

PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING OF A REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS TRIAGE AND RESPITE BED FACILITY SUMMARY

In 2011 Representative Rick Miera sponsored House Joint Memorial 17 “to study the needs of persons with mental health disorders in crisis situations and to develop strategies to improve services, treatment and care outside of law enforcement and detention in order to reduce the number of individuals with mental health disorders who are in detention facilities or require law enforcement intervention.”

As described in the task force report, “one of the greatest challenges facing law enforcement agencies and detention centers across the nation and in New Mexico is how to respond to people who have mental health disorders.” For lack of other alternatives, the response has been to arrest and detain persons with mental health disorders in crisis in the local jails. In the Metropolitan Detention Center in Bernalillo County 52% of the population is on the Psych Services Unit caseload with a startling 69% of the female population receiving psych services.

The conclusions of all task forces have been virtually identical. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive behavioral health crisis system, when well-coordinated and implemented, is an effective approach to service delivery for persons in a behavioral health crisis.

To achieve this, Bernalillo County approved \$1 million for a Supportive Housing program designed to provide critical supportive services and housing to individuals with mental health and co-occurring issues involved in the criminal justice system. In addition Bernalillo County is requesting funding to phase in critical components of a crisis system starting with a Regional Crisis Stabilization Center. A Regional Crisis Stabilization Center will provide front end services utilized by police, mental health professions, first responders and community for individuals in a crisis who would otherwise not receive help or taken to jail or the emergency room. The goal of the center is to reduce unnecessary incarceration, criminal justice involvement, reduce recidivism, provide services and stabilization to high risk and need individuals and enhance public safety. All of which have proven significant cost savings in other jurisdictions.

Proposal- Budget: \$6 million (\$3 million capital-outlay/\$3 million 1st year operational cost)

- Funding for a 15 bed regional crisis triage unit to serve Bernalillo County and the greater Albuquerque metropolitan area with anticipated stays of 48 to 72 hours.
- Funding for a 20 bed regional respite unit with anticipated stays of 2-3 to provide transition services from the respite facility to services in the community;
- Creation of a steering committee including representation of the Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative to guide the implementation.

Fifty Second Legislature, First Session, 2015

AR 2014 -
House #
Senate #
Commission #

